

2625942

Registered provider: My Choice Children's Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is privately owned. It opened in May 2021. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children with social, emotional and/or mental health difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since May 2021.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 August 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: Not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: Not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

A number of children have moved into, and on from, the home since its opening. Staff supported two older children to move on following a period of negative behaviour between children. Although this has continued, children are being supported by staff to understand the impact of their behaviours. This helps children to form appropriate attachments to each other and understand when other children, for whatever reason, leave the home.

The home has recently welcomed younger children. Their move into the home has, in the main, been appropriately planned when this has been possible. Staff were observed to engage well with children during the inspection. However, the skill of staff in working with younger children has been identified as an area where further development is needed. Specific training in working with younger children has been planned for the staff team.

Children are being supported to engage in their educational placements. There are individual learning plans to reflect each child's needs. This bespoke approach is seen as positive by professionals working with the children. Staff support one child to travel a significant distance to school. However, the child's views and the impact of this travel on their presenting behaviours are not fully understood by the team.

Children are supported to take part in a range of enjoyable activities. Children have enjoyed taking part in summer games which included children from other homes in the organisation. Children are helped to explore their own individual interests outside the home. This is important as they begin to develop their sense of self.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children's individual vulnerabilities and associated risks are, on the whole, well understood by staff. Children's risk management plans provide strategies to address identified risks. However, the information recorded for one child does not reflect significant risks following an incident. This is concerning, due to the potential impact on the child's safety. There were improvement measures being put in place during the inspection.

Fixtures and fittings in the home have been damaged due to behaviours that others may find challenging. Staff continue to work on addressing children's individual needs. A number of previously identified health and safety issues were being addressed during the inspection.

Practice concerns in relation to two incidents of staff restricting children's movement have been appropriately investigated. However, the use of another physical

intervention by staff, in relation to one child, was not recorded. This did not provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice or understand the impact of the intervention on the child. There is a workshop planned for staff around developing awareness of deprivation of liberty safeguards.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager has acknowledged the challenges the home has faced since it opened. The manager has addressed practice issues appropriately once these have been recognised within the staff team. However, the monitoring of the quality of care provided to children is not sufficiently developed at present. This means the manager does not have an appropriate level of oversight to identify practice issues.

The review of incidents is not sufficiently detailed. The registered manager is not consistently identifying specific learning from these incidents. Staff are not provided with new strategies when responding to behaviours that challenge. However, the registered manager does talk with children following known incidents.

The deputy manager supports the registered manager effectively. Staff feel supported by the management team. Staff are provided with a blend of individual and group supervision. However, inconsistency in the frequency of individual supervision does not contribute to effective monitoring of individual staff practice.

The responsible individual addressed shortfalls identified during the inspection in a timely manner. The responsible individual recognises the strengths and areas for development within the home. They provide additional training and opportunities for reflection for staff to develop their knowledge. This will help staff to provide an improved quality of care once they have put into practice their new learning.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iii))	30 September 2021
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(d))	30 September 2021

The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))	30 September 2021
Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home. Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2))	30 September 2021
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—	30 September 2021

the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
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Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the 'Social care common inspection framework'. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2625942

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: My Choice Children's Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: 3a Mill Green Business Estate, Mill Green Road, Haywards Heath RH16 1XQ

Responsible individual: Dawn Ives

Registered manager: Michelle Allen

Inspectors

Maria Lonergan, Social Care Inspector
Sara Stoker, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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